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## AMERICAN ART NEWS.

Entered as second-class mail matter, February 5, 1909,  
at New York Post Office under the Act  
March 3, 1879.  
Published Weekly from Oct. 15 to June 1 inclusive,  
Monthly from June 15 to Sept. 15 inclusive.  
AMERICAN ART NEWS CO., INC.,  
Publishers.

15-17 East 40th Street.  
Tel. 7180 Murray Hill.  
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SUBSCRIPTION RATES.  
YEAR, IN ADVANCE - \$2.00  
Canada (postage extra) - .50  
Foreign Countries - 2.75  
Single Copies - .10

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## BUREAU OF EXPERTIZING.

Advice as to the placing at public or private sale of art work of all kinds, pictures, sculptures, furniture, bibelots, etc., will be given at the office of the AMERICAN ART NEWS, and also counsel as to the value of art works and the obtaining of the best "expert" opinion on the same. For these services a nominal fee will be charged. Persons having art works and desirous of disposing or obtaining an idea of their value will find our service on these lines a saving of time, and, in many instances of unnecessary expense. It is guaranteed that any opinion given will be so given without regard to personal or commercial motives.

## BUREAU OF APPRAISAL.

We are so frequently called upon to pass upon the value of art works for collectors and estates, for the purpose of insurance, sale, or, more especially to determine whether prior appraisals made to fix the amount due under the inheritance or death taxes are just and correct ones—and so often find that such former appraisals have been made by persons not qualified by experience or knowledge of art quality or market values, with resultant deception and often overpayments of taxes, etc.—that we suggest to all collectors and executors the advisability of consulting our Bureau of Appraisal either in the first place or for revision of other appraisals. This Bureau is conducted by persons in every way qualified by experience and study of art works for many years, and especially of market values, both here and abroad; our appraisals are made without regard to anything but quality and values, and our charges are moderate—our chief desire being to save our patrons and the public from ignorant, needless and costly appraisal expenditure.

## ART SALE RECORDS.

Collectors, dealers and others interested are reminded that the first two numbers of Sales of the Year for 1915, in pamphlet form, are still on sale at the AMERICAN ART NEWS office, 15 East 40 St., at 25 cents each, postage prepaid. No. 1 is devoted to the Brayton Ives Collection of Prints sold at the American Art Galleries April 12-14 and No. 2 to the Blakeslee and Duveen Picture Sales, under the same auspices, at the Plaza Hotel Ball Room, April 21-23 and April 29.

## A SIGNIFICANT MOVE.

The leasing of the fine and spacious Art Gallery erected by the late Benjamin Altman at the rear of his former mansion at Fifth Ave. and 50 St., and just west of the Avenue, by the well-known and prominent art house of E. & C. Canessa and Co., of Naples, Paris and New York, together with the leasing of former handsome private residences in the same neighborhood by the Paris art houses of Jansen and Pares and the London one of Sparks—all chronicled elsewhere in our columns, are further proofs, if such were needed, of the shifting of the art trade interests and markets, simultaneously with the transfer of financial centers, from the old world to the new.

This shifting of the art interests and markets across the Atlantic had begun long before the war's outbreak, but its

progress has been undoubtedly hastened by that calamity.

We congratulate the Messrs. Canessa on their acquisition of the Altman Gallery, in which, after rearrangement and refitting, they purpose installing the varied and beautiful exhibition of antiques and art treasures they are now showing in the Italian Pavilion at the Panama-Pacific Exposition, and which has been one of the most interesting and important art features of the Exposition.

That so well-established and leading an art house as that of the Canessas should have decided to establish itself in such a location and to lease a gallery, so much esteemed by American art lovers from its association with the lamented and generous art patron, Mr. Altman, is a cause for congratulation not only to New York but to all American art lovers, while the significance of the move will be appreciated in the art world of Europe as well as America.

## THE DISPUTED ROMNEY.

The regrettable incident which we chronicled last week, of the suit brought in London by Mr. Henry E. Huntington of this city and San Gabriel, Cal., against the old and well-known house of Lewis and Simmons, of London, Paris and New York, to recover the sum of \$100,000 which the collector paid in this city for a large double figure presentment of Mrs. Siddons and her sister, Mrs. Kemble—as being the work of George Romney, has been and continues to be the universal topic of discussion in art circles. We call the incident regrettable because it tends to disturb the minds of many American art lovers and collectors, who argue that if so prominent, and presumably so intelligent and well-informed a collector as Mr. Huntington could have been deceived in so notable a picture, and so long established and reputable a house as Lewis and Simmons, could also have been deceived as to the validity of a work by such a master as Romney—of what avail are study and knowledge on the part of a collector, and of what service are the guarantees of even leading and reputable art firms?

And yet, it seems to us, that there is not, and should not, be any real cause for such a feeling or conclusion, from this incident, on the part of art lovers or collectors. The matter simply resolves itself, as the suit soon to be tried in London will reveal, into a question of the preponderance of "expert" or authoritative testimony on either side.

The good faith of the sellers of this canvas, it also seems to us, cannot be questioned, and this being the case, and with any suspicion of dishonesty or fraud on their part eliminated, the art world can the more calmly watch the trial of the suit and draw valuable lessons from its progress and result. It is unbelievable that a house like Lewis and Simmons would purposely sell and for so large an amount, to such a collector, as Mr. Huntington, a picture they knew to be spurious, or, in the vernacular, a "Fake." To put the case on a low plane they are certainly not fools.

We understand that Lewis and Simmons had the best possible advice from the best known authorities in England on the work of Romney, on the canvas, and which authorities they will presumably produce as witnesses when the suit is tried, before they even offered the picture to Mr. Huntington. It is proven by the interview with Mr. Isaac Simmons published elsewhere in our columns, that the picture was seen and admired while it hung in the Metropolitan Club in this city by dealers, critics and art lovers, and not questioned—and this would seem to endorse their own judgment and that of the authorities they consulted upon the validity of the work. We hold no brief for Lewis and Simmons, and we argue solely from the statements published, and other information in our possession, not obtained from them.

In our issue of February 20 last in an editorial entitled "As to Attributions," we commented upon the very general misapprehension in this country as to so-called "Expert" testimony, which is here, curiously enough, generally considered infallible testimony, and we further said an art "Expert" is one who has, or should have, if he is qualified to use or enjoy the appellation, superior knowledge of some branch or branches of art, which makes, or should make him, more or less of an authority on such branch or branches of art, but with superior knowledge and education, also a pre-requisite for an "Expert," he must necessarily, at times, be mistaken. He cannot, in the nature of things, be infallible in his judgment or decisions. Witness the now almost universal belief that the eminent Dr. Bode, of Berlin, erred in his judgment as to the famous wax bust of "Flora" being the work of Da Vinci, instead of the modern English sculptor Lucas, and the frequent and recurring controversies between Dr. Bode and that other eminent authority and "Expert," Dr. Bredius of The Hague, as to the validity of certain works attributed to Rembrandt—controversies that have never been definitely decided in favor of either man.

It may be that Mr. Huntington, or those acting for him in this suit, can and will produce authorities or "Experts," whose testimony as to the validity of the disputed work will outweigh, with the English Judge and Jury, that of the authorities and "Experts" whom Lewis and Simmons will call, and whom they consulted before their purchase of the picture. The case only recently tried in Philadelphia and exclusively chronicled by the ART NEWS here, that of the artist Gruppe against Mr. Kinsley of Phila. to recover an amount of \$5,000 and interest which he claimed Mr. Kinsley agreed to pay him for an example of Mauve—the validity of which work the latter questioned; was decided in Mr. Gruppe's favor by the jury, not only from the fact that the plaintiff had the weight of testimony as to the picture's genuineness in his favor, but because he proved the absence of any motive to deceive the defendant.

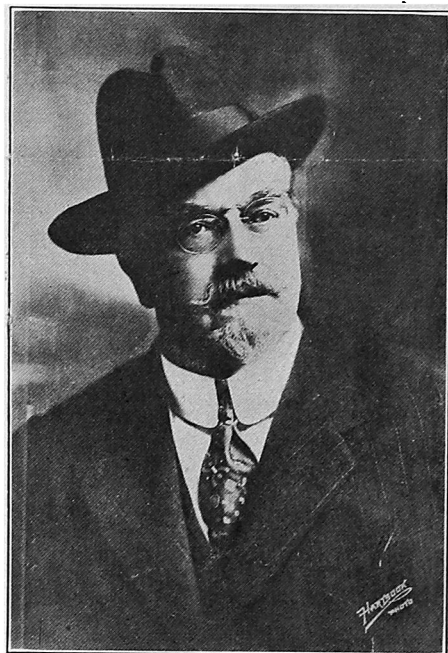
As in the Gruppe-Kinsley suit the

absence of motive to defraud and in the case in question, the seeming impossibility of belief that an old and reputable art firm, would be so foolish, to say the least, as to wilfully and knowingly attempt to defraud a wealthy collector and a valued patron and to hazard the loss of his most desirable custom, and the further fact that, probably much against their will, they are contesting the suit to uphold their action and reputation, should, in our opinion, and without any reflection upon or disrespect to Mr. Huntington, who has come to think himself deceived and is naturally aggrieved thereby, gain for them the sympathy of all reputable dealers, who may, any day, find themselves in a similar position, and through no fault of their own.

## OBITUARY.

## Waldo Story.

Thomas Waldo Story, sculptor, son of the eminent American sculptor, William Wetmore Story, long resident in Rome, and brother of the painter, Julian Story, and of the Marchesa Peruzzi, died at his home in this city Oct. 23 at the age of sixty. Born in the celebrated Barberini palace in Rome, which was leased by his father in 1847, four years after the latter married Miss Eldridge of Cambridge, Mass., he inherited the lease on his father's death and most of the elder Story's art collections, his brother receiving the family summer villa at Vallambrosa. A pupil of his father, Waldo Story soon gained commissions and reputation. He modelled the first statue, that of Sir William Vernon Harcourt, placed in the House of Commons in London, as well as a bust of Lord Randolph Churchill, also there, and his statue



T. WALDO STORY

in the chapel of Blenheim Palace. He also designed the bronze doors of the library erected by the late J. Pierpont Morgan, a gold mosaic in memory of the elder Mr. and Mrs. August Belmont in Trinity Church at Newport, and a drinking fountain given by Gen. Draper to the town of Hopedale, Mass. Mr. Story was an intimate friend of Whistler, who referred to him often in his "Gentle Art of Making Enemies." He was twice married, his first wife, still living, being a daughter of the English piano manufacturer, Broadwood. He later married Miss Bessie Abbott, the opera singer. Of his two daughters, Miss Gwendolyn, married Capt. Courtney Stewart, who was then naval attaché at the British Embassy in Rome. In 1907 Mr. Story with the late Frederick Gerhard organized the Ritz Importation Co. in this city for the importation of wines and table delicacies. He was a member of the Calumet Club.

## Constantin Makovsky.

The death was announced Monday from Petrograd, in a street accident, of Constantin Makovsky, the well known Russian historical and portrait painter. He was in his seventy-seventh year and visited this country about 20 years ago. Several of his paintings including "The Russian Marriage Feast," and "Choosing the Bride" were shown at C. W. Schumann & Sons estab-

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